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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/018,018

04/22/2002

Karen Briley-Saebo

NIDN-10427

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11/09/2006

GE HEALTHCARE, INC.

IP DEPARTMENT

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EXAMINER

SMITH, RUTH S

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3737

DATE MAILED: 11/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/018,018

Applicant(s)

BRILEY-SAEBO ET AL.

Examiner

Ruth S. Smith

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3737

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 October 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on October 26, 2006 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 14-15, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuhn et al in view of Prince ('619) or White et al. Kuhn discloses MR imaging whereby a catheter filled with a blood pool contrast agent (column 6, lines 20-35) is placed into the vasculature of a patient and an MR image of at least a part of the body containing the catheter is generated. The contrast agent within the catheter allows one to visualize the tip of the catheter and to guide its placement in the body. Kuhn fails to set forth that the contrast agent is administered to an area around the catheter tip via an i.v. injection directly into the body. Prince and White et al are each an example that discloses providing a contrast agent to an area to be imaged via IV injection. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to have modified Kuhn such that the blood pool contrast agent is administered by IV injection. Such a modification involves the substitution of one known method for administering a contrast agent to an area surrounding the catheter tip for another. With respect to claim 25, this limitation is inherent in the method disclosed.

Claims 16-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuhn in view of Prince ('619) or White et al as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Gunther et al. Kuhn fails to specifically disclose the blood pool contrast agents used. Gunther et al disclose MR blood pool contrast agents. The contrast agents are as set forth in claims 16-19. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to have further modified Kuhn such that the blood pool contrast agents used are those disclosed by Gunther et al. Such a modification merely involves the selection of a known type of blood pool contrast agent for those used in the method of Kuhn. With respect to claims 20-24, Gunther et al discloses the use of these materials and positive and negative contrast agents which use differences in T1 and T2 as set forth.

Claims 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuhn in view of Prince ('619) or White et al as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Ericcson et al. Kuhn fails to specifically disclose the specific types of imaging sequences set forth. The use of the specific types of imaging sequences set forth in claims 26-27 are old and well known and taught for example by Ericcson et al. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to have further modified Kuhn such that the imaging sequences used are as taught by Ericcson et al. Such a modification merely involves the selection of a known type of imaging sequences used in MR contrast enhanced imaging.

Claims 28-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuhn in view of Prince ('619) or White et al as applied to claim 14 above, and further in view of Filler et al. Kuhn fails to specifically disclose the specific types of contrast agent and imaging parameters. Prince discloses MR imaging using a blood pool contrast agent and small flip angles combined with short echoes as well as sequences that employ larger flip angles and longer echo times. Filler et al disclose the use of a blood pool contrast agent that includes an iron oxide. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to have further modified Kuhn such that the contrast agent includes iron

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oxide and the flip angles are between 20 and 90 degrees with echo times being less than 10 ms. Such a modification merely involves the selection of known types of blood pool contrast agents and known imaging sequences used in contrast enhanced MR imaging procedures.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 14-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth S. Smith whose telephone number is 571-272-4745. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30 AM-4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached on 571-272-4956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Ruth S. Smith
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3737